

MORE RIDDLES.

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MORE RIDDLES.

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Some of History's Toughest Riddles

<http://mentalfloss.com/article/62656/11-historys-toughest-riddles>

<http://listverse.com/2013/10/27/top-10-intriguing-riddles-from-history/>

A HOBBIT HEAD SCRATCHER

Anyone who's gotten lost in Middle Earth knows that J.R.R. Tolkien loved a logic puzzle. The riddle competition between Bilbo Baggins and Gollum in *The Hobbit* serves up several mind-bending morsels, the trickiest of which might be:

**Voiceless it cries,
Wingless flutters,
Toothless bites,
Mouthless mutters.**

Answer: The wind

THE MAD HATTER'S DIRTY TRICK

One of the most famous literary riddles in literature is also the most frustrating ... because it came without an answer! In *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, the Mad Hatter poses this puzzle to Alice:

"Why is a raven like a writing desk?"

Answer: The Hatter doesn't have the answer, and as it turns out, Carroll didn't, either. But readers' desire for closure was so intense that the author was forced to dream up an answer that later appeared in a preface:

Enquiries have been so often addressed to me, as to whether any answer to the Hatter's Riddle can be imagined, that I may as well put on record here what seems to me to be a fairly appropriate answer, viz: 'Because it can produce a few notes, tho they are very flat; and it is never put with the wrong end in front!' This, however, is merely an afterthought; the Riddle, as originally invented, had no answer at all."

OEDIPUS'S COMPLEX PROBLEM

In Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*, the title character must answer to the Sphinx to save his own life and continue his journey to Thebes. Spoiler: he nails it. The monster asks:

**What walks on four feet in the morning,
two in the afternoon and three at night?**

Answer: "Man: as an infant, he crawls on all fours; as an adult, he walks on two legs and; in old age, he uses a 'walking' stick."

A BULLY RIDDLE

This riddle was rumored to be Teddy Roosevelt's favorite:

**I talk, but I do not speak my mind
I hear words, but I do not listen to thoughts
When I wake, all see me
When I sleep, all hear me
Many heads are on my shoulders
Many hands are at my feet
The strongest steel cannot break my visage
But the softest whisper can destroy me
The quietest whimper can be heard.**

Answer: An actor

A HARRY POTTER PUZZLER

The Harry Potter series is teeming with playful language and cleverness, so it's only right that a juicy riddle made its way into the series. In *The Goblet of Fire*, J.K. Rowling gives a nod to the Sphinx by putting one in the maze during the Triwizard Tournament. Harry is tasked with cracking this puzzle:

**First think of the person who lives in disguise,
Who deals in secrets and tells naught but lies.
Next, tell me what's always the last thing to mend,
The middle of middle and end of the end?
And finally give me the sound often heard
During the search for a hard-to-find word.
Now string them together, and answer me this,
Which creature would you be unwilling to kiss?**

Answer: A spider.

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THE ONE THAT STARTED IT ALL

The ancient civilization of Sumer introduced the world to a number of different things, including irrigation, writing, and the idea of laws. With a society dating as far back as 4000 B.C., they were also responsible for one of the earliest examples of a riddle, said to have been written down almost 4,000 years ago. It was first translated by E.I. Gordon in 1960 and is a great example of Sumerian culture and their views on life. There are two versions but the shorter, and more poetic, reads:

**"There is a house.
One enters it blind and comes out seeing.
What is it?"**

Answer: A school.

The full riddle, in one translation, is as follows:

**A house based on a foundation like the skies
A house one has covered with a veil like a secret box
A house set on a base like a goose
One enters it blind,
Leaves it seeing.**

Answer: the School

The longer version of the riddle exposes an entirely new level of meaning than the cut version did. It is not just 'any school'. It is a school, or a way of teaching, which connects to the descriptions provided within the riddle.

Ancient Wisdom of Sumerian Riddles: <http://mysteriouswritings.com/ancient-wisdom-of-sumerian-riddles/>

InQUIZition by Mark Evans:

SEE: https://books.google.com/books?id=1BxufnId898C&pg=PA56&lpg=PA56&dq=sumerian+riddle+a+house+blind&source=bl&ots=ttMYPmNc7D&sig=kvQV7ikGQkPowy1v0IUyLmcxF4&hl=en&sa=X&ei=eIIIUr_nD8rXigKsroHoCg#v=onepage&q=sumerian%20riddle%20a%20house%20blind&f=false